

# GREAT OUTDOORS AMERICA—A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY TREASURED LANDSCAPES AGENDA

President Obama and Secretary Salazar have a bold agenda for protecting America's open spaces, treasured landscapes, wildlife, and the historic and cultural sites that tell our nation's story.

## PROTECTING, PROMOTING, AND RESTORING AMERICA'S TREASURED NATURAL LANDSCAPES

### Passage of Historic Great Outdoors America-Treasured Landscapes Legislative Package

Laying the foundation for his Administration's commitment to promoting a Great Outdoors America agenda, President Obama in March signed the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-11), the most extensive expansion of land and water conservation in more than a generation. Most of those lands will fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior. The President and Secretary actively supported early passage of the legislation by the Congress in 2009. The bill's enactment was a major early landmark achievement of the Administration. The Act:



*President Obama and Secretary Salazar at Yellowstone NP*

- **Designated more than 2 million acres of new wilderness**, nearly as much as the previous Administration designated in eight years. The designations span nine states and include Rocky Mountain National Park and Dominguez Canyon (CO); Monongahela (WV); Virginia Ridge and Valley (VA); Soda Mountain, Oregon Badlands, Spring Basin, Mt. Hood, and Copper Salmon (OR); Owyhee County (ID); Sabinoso (NM); Eastern Sierra and Northern San Gabriel, Riverside County, Sequoia-Kings Canyon (CA); Zion/Washington County (UT); and Pictured Rocks (MI).
- **Added more than 1,100 miles of rivers to the National Wild and Scenic River System** in seven states (Oregon, Idaho, California, Utah, Arizona, Wyoming, and Massachusetts). The rivers include 387 miles on the Snake River in Wyoming, and 40 miles on the Taunton River in Massachusetts. Wild and Scenic Rivers designations preserve free-flowing rivers that possess outstanding environmental, scenic, and recreational features.
- **Authorized three new national park units**—Paterson Great Falls in New Jersey, William Jefferson Clinton Birthplace in Arkansas, and River Raisin Battlefield in Michigan.

**Created one new national monument**, the Prehistoric Trackways National Monument in New Mexico to protect the world's most significant Early Permian tracksites, which animals

predating dinosaurs about 280 million years ago. National Monument designation gives protections to important areas that contain historical and pre-historical interests.

- **Designated four new national conservation areas**, encompassing more than 330,000 acres. These include the Dominguez-Escalante National Conservation Area (CO); Fort Stanton-Snowy River Cave (NM); and Red Cliffs and Beaver Dam Wash National Conservation Areas (UT). National conservation areas provide important protections from development and improve recreational opportunities for all Americans.
- **Designated two new national recreation areas**, encompassing more than 41,800 acres, including Mount Hood Recreation Area (OR) and Bridgeport Winter Recreation Area (CA).



*Secretary Salazar at the new Dominguez-Escalante NCA in Colorado*

- **Created new national trails, adding more than 2,800 miles to the National Trails System:** the Arizona National Scenic Trail, the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail (WA), the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail, the Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail, and the New England National Scenic Trail. Additionally, we expanded the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail to include new trail segments and other components. The National Trails System preserves public access to hiking trails for the enjoyment and economic benefit of all.
- **Enlarged or authorized enlargement of the boundaries of more than a dozen existing national park units**, including Little River Canyon National Preserve (AL); Hopewell Culture National Historical Park (OH); Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve (LA); Minute Man National Historical Park (MA); Everglades National Park (FL); Kalaupapa National Historical Park (HI); Thomas Edison National Historical Park (NJ); Martin Van Buren National Historic Site (NY); Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park and Fort Davis National Historical Site (TX).
- **Established 10 new national heritage areas:** Sangre de Cristo, Cache La Poudre River, South Park (CO); Northern Plains (ND); Baltimore (MD); Freedom's Way (MA and NH); Mississippi Hills and Mississippi Delta (MS); Muscle Shoals (AL); and Kenai Mountains-Turnagain Arm (AK).
- **Established the 26-million acre National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) within the Bureau of Land Management**, codifying Interior's administrative creation of the system.
- **Authorized three major water settlements** that address the nation's obligations to Native Americans: the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement (CA), the Shoshone-Paiute Tribes of Duck Valley Reservation Water Rights Settlement (NV), and the Northwestern New Mexico Rural Projects and Settlement under which 80,000 members of the Navajo Nation will ultimately have clean running water for the first time in their lives.

- **Launched efforts to improve the scientific understanding of critical water resources**, including the impact of climate change on water.

### **Restoring Our Landscapes and Creating Jobs through the Economic Recovery Act**

Through President Obama's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Interior is investing more than \$1 billion to conserve America's timeless treasures—our stunning natural landscapes, our monuments to liberty, the icons of our culture and heritage—while helping working families and communities prosper again. Interior's investments include an historic \$750 million for our National Park System to help preserve and protect national icons and historic landscapes, improve energy efficiency and renewable energy use at park units throughout the nation, improve roads for more than 275 million visitors, remediate abandoned mine sites on park units, and provide historic preservation funding to



*Tangle Lakes, Denali Highway, Alaska*

protect and restore buildings at historically black colleges. Interior has targeted more than 750 projects at some of the nation's most recognizable monuments and landmarks to receive stimulus funds.

In addition, the Bureau of Land Management is investing \$305 million to restore landscapes, clean up abandoned mines, protect wildlife habitat, reduce the risk of wildfire, and expand its capacity to authorize renewable energy development on public lands.

### **Investing in America's Land and Water Conservation Fund**

President Obama's 2010 budget protects open spaces, forests and wildlife habitat by providing \$450 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for key conservation and land acquisition programs in the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior. This is a 48 percent increase over the 2009 level and put the Administration on track to reach a fully-funded \$900 million in LWCF funding.

### **Designating New National Trails**

Secretary Salazar designated 23 trails in 13 states as newly recognized National Recreation Trails, adding more than 525 miles of trails to the National Trails System. The new trails include Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail (AL); San Jose Trail Network (CA); Morain Hills Trail System (IL); Pioneer Nature Trail (KS); Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenways (PA); Historic Champlain Canalway Trail and Walkway Over the Hudson Project (NY); Cameron Park Trails (TX); and Occoquan Water Trail (VA).

### **Developing a New Water Flow Protocol for Grand Canyon National Park**

In December, Secretary Salazar announced the development of a science-based protocol to provide for additional experimental high-flow releases from Glen Canyon Dam down the Colorado River

through Grand Canyon National Park. The purpose of the experimental flows is to seek better protection of the natural resources and ecosystem of the park without affecting overall amounts of water owed to area water users.

### **Renewing the Federal Commitment to the Everglades**

Secretary Salazar has helped fulfill the Obama Administration's strong commitment to restoring and preserving the Everglades ecosystem. The actions taken include:

- In its first year, the Obama Administration provided more leadership and funding to move the Everglades restoration from planning to construction of critical projects than the previous administration. The \$600 million provided by the Administration for FY 2009 and commitment to be a full partner in the largest landscape level restoration anywhere and puts the project back on track.

- Secretary Salazar took steps to reverse the previous Administration's decision to remove Everglades National Park from the United Nation's List of World Heritage Sites in Danger. The UN list focuses the attention and resources of the international community on protecting internationally significant areas, such as the Everglades.



*Little Blue Heron, Everglades National Park*

- In December, after 20-years of debate and planning, Secretary Salazar joined officials from the Army Corps of Engineers, State of Florida and the regional water district in breaking ground for construction of a one-mile bridge adjacent to the northern boundary of the Everglades National Park on the Tamiami Trail. The bridge is a key component of ongoing efforts to revive the Everglades. It is the largest construction project in the history of the National Park Service and is critical to restoring fresh water flows to Everglades National Park and the South Florida ecosystem.
- Secretary Salazar made eliminating the Burmese pythons and other non-native constrictor snakes from the Everglades a priority and expanded existing Interior programs to combat these species.

### **Renewing the Federal Commitment to California's Bay Delta**

Secretary Salazar has led the Obama Administration's renewed commitment to restore the California Bay Delta, which is the largest estuary on the West Coast. The Bay Delta is critically important to hundreds of species of fish and wildlife and to millions of Californians who rely on it for their water supply. In spite of this, the previous administration abandoned pursuit of a balanced policy that included on-going investments in both water supply and ecological restoration projects.



The Interior Department entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council on Environmental Quality and four other key federal agencies in September and then launched a coordinated Federal Action Plan in December to address both short-term and long-term needs of the Bay Delta.



*The First Family at Yellowstone National Park*

### **Protecting Yellowstone National Park**

The National Park Service began efforts to establish an interim rule to manage snowmobile and snowcoach access at Yellowstone for the next two years while it crafts a long-term winter use plan for the park. The Service is using the best science available to protect Yellowstone's natural resources and wildlife while still allowing a robust winter recreational experience for off-road vehicle enthusiasts and local businesses. The interim rule would allow up to 318 snowmobiles in the park each day for the next two winters, replacing the 2004 rule currently in effect by court order that allowed up to 720 snowmobiles per day.

### **Protecting Grand Canyon National Park**

Secretary Salazar withdrew 1 million acres of federal lands from mining activity in the Arizona Strip abutting Grand Canyon National Park for two years. This will enable the Department to evaluate whether to withdraw the lands from new, primarily uranium, mining claims for an additional 20 years because of the need to protect the park, tribal lands, and cultural resources.

### **Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay**

In May, President Obama issued an Executive Order declaring the Chesapeake Bay a national treasure and committed the federal government to a robust cleanup effort through a coordinated effort between federal agencies. This was the first ever presidential directive on the bay and President Obama's first environmental Executive Order. Interior and fellow agencies announced their draft strategy for public comment in November to accelerate cleanup efforts and track progress. They committed to achieving milestones every two years, with a goal of having the measures they need to restore the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed in place by no later than 2025.

### **Protecting and Restoring the Great Lakes**

The Department of the Interior is a key participant in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative that President Obama created in October 2009. This initiative calls for the Great Lakes states to prepare a plan of action in cooperation with 16 federal agencies. The U.S. Geological Survey recently completed a Great Lakes pilot study for a National Assessment of Water Availability and Use. This provides the region's water managers with up-to-date information for implementing the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Compact. It also will help form the basis for decisions on future water withdrawals in the region.

### **Providing Funding to Restore Abandoned Coal Mines**

The Office of Surface Mining made \$369 million available to 28 eligible coal-producing states and tribes through to restore abandoned coal mines, an increase of more than \$70 million from 2008. In announcing the funds, Secretary Salazar noted that these grants consistently provide thousands of well-paying jobs in America's economically depressed coal mining areas.

### **Reconsidering the Prior Administration's Decision to Offer Oil and Gas Leases on the Doorstep of Utah's National Parks**



*Wilson Arch, near Moab, Utah*

In February, Secretary Salazar directed the Bureau of Land Management to withdraw and reconsider for leasing 77 oil and gas lease parcels near Dinosaur National Monument and Arches and Canyonlands National Parks in Utah. He withdrew the parcels, which the previous Administration had issued in its final weeks in office, to better determine where oil and gas development is appropriate on public lands in the area. A federal court had halted the leases, citing fundamental flaws in the Department's compliance with legal processes.

The resulting interdisciplinary review, itself a new approach Secretary Salazar directed Interior to undertake, recommended leasing of 17 parcels, withdrawal of 8, and deferral of 52 others. Importantly, the report recommended changes in BLM's oil and gas leasing program to not only better protect treasured landscapes and the environment but also better manage oil and gas development on public lands.

### **Creating Mountaintop Mining Rules to Better Protect Streams**

The Obama Administration developed a multi-pronged interagency plan via a Memorandum of Understanding marking significant policy shifts on mountaintop mining. The memorandum provides for continued mining of this important conventional energy source but also strengthens oversight and regulation and minimizes adverse environmental consequences of mountaintop coal mining. The agreement establishes several short and long-term actions regulatory agencies will take to will improve coordination and reduce water impacts resulting from mountaintop mining.

The Department subsequently initiated an administrative rulemaking to create a comprehensive new stream buffer zone rule. This would replace the previous Administration's 2008 rule which relaxed protections of streams. Meanwhile, Interior strengthened oversight of state surface coal mining programs while the new rule is developed.

### **Withdrawing the Western Oregon Plan Revisions and Moving Toward a New Long-Term Forest Management Strategy**

In July, Secretary Salazar withdrew a legally indefensible plan to intensify logging in western Oregon (the Western Oregon Plan Revisions), which the previous Administration finalized in December, 2008, just weeks before leaving office. Interior is moving forward with timber sales that can be offered in the short-term while the agency takes a fresh look at long-term forest management strategies.

### **Restoring the Klamath River Basin**

The Department of the Interior is the lead agency in negotiating a community-led and supported plan to end decades of conflict and restore the Klamath River Basin in Oregon and California. In June, Secretary Salazar set a September deadline for reaching a draft agreement to encourage agreement among the 26 diverse stakeholders. The stakeholders reached an historic agreement to evaluate and potentially



*Upper Klamath National Wildlife Refuge, California*

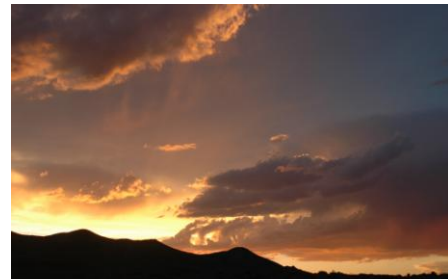
undertake the largest river restoration in American history. This agreement entails the possible decommissioning and removal of four privately-owned hydropower dams on the Klamath River, habitat restoration throughout the basin, and establishment of a sustainable allocation of water for communities, agriculture, fish, and refuges. Final approval of both agreements will be finalized in early 2010. The Secretary will then undertake a comprehensive evaluation of the costs and benefits of removing the dams before giving final approval.

### **Purchasing Critical Inholdings**

The Department joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture in purchasing 5,026 acres of high value conservation land in Colorado, Montana and Nevada. The largest parcel is 4,573 acres within the Canyons of the Ancients National Monument in Colorado. The acquisitions are authorized under the Federal Land Transaction Facilitation Act of 2000. The act established a special land conservation fund to purchase private inholdings in western states from willing sellers whose acreage is surrounded by or next to lands managed by Interior agencies or the U.S. Forest Service. Such purchases receive funding from already completed federal land sales.

### **Approving New Funds for Nevada and Lake Tahoe Conservation and Restoration Projects**

In September, Secretary Salazar, BLM Director Bob Abbey and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid announced approval more than \$135 million for a variety of landscape protection, restoration and improvement projects in the Lake Tahoe area and throughout Nevada under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act. The funds come from revenue generated by the sale of public lands identified for disposal in the Las Vegas Valley by the Act.



*Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon of  
Emigrant Trails National Conservation  
Area, Nevada*



## PROMOTING, PROTECTING AND RESTORING AMERICA'S TREASURED CULTURAL AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPES

### Re-Opening the Statue of Liberty's Crown

In one of his first official acts, Secretary Salazar ordered the opening to the public of the Statue of Liberty's Crown by July 4, 2009, with appropriate safety and security limits. On July 4, 2009, the National Park Service re-opened the crown and initiated a long-term renovation and restoration program for Lady Liberty and nearby Ellis Island.



*January 23, 2009: Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar at the Statue of Liberty*

### Moving Forward on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial

After 11 years of dispute, Secretary Salazar announced resolution of issues preventing issuance of the national parks permit allowing construction of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial on the National Mall. Secretary Salazar signed the construction permit on October 29, 2009.



*Secretary Salazar with Park Ranger Keith Newlin at the citizen-created memorial at the site of the crash of United Flight 93 on September 11, 2001*

### Finding Consensus to Move Forward on the Flight 93 National Memorial

Secretary Salazar helped broker agreements on land acquisition for the memorial, resolving disputes that threatened to derail creation of the memorial honoring the heroes of the 9/11/01 terrorist attack on Flight 93 near Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Those efforts resulted in groundbreaking for the memorial on November 7, 2009.



### **Celebrating the American Revolution**

In another resolution of a longstanding dispute, the Department successfully reached agreement to develop a national museum, the American Revolution Center, at Independence National Park in downtown Philadelphia. In exchange for locating the center at this site, the National Park Service will receive a 78-acre parcel of private land that the center owns within the boundary of another Revolutionary War treasure, Valley Forge National Historical Park.

### **Remembering a World War II Tragedy at Port Chicago**

President Obama signed legislation to create the nation's 392<sup>nd</sup> national park, the Port Chicago Naval Magazine National Memorial in Concord, California. The park commemorates the place of the greatest loss of life on the home front during World War II – 320 men died and almost 400 others were injured in an explosion as ships were being loaded with munitions. Of the 320 men killed, 202 were African American.

### **Telling America's Story—National Museum of the American Latino Commission**

The Obama Administration convened the 23-member National Museum of the American Latino Commission, filling positions that had been vacant under the previous administration. The commission will study over a two-year period the feasibility of and plan for a new national museum in the nation's capital to portray the art, history, and culture of the Latino population of the United States. The law gave the Department of Interior, supervisory and budgetary authority over the commission. Secretary Salazar assembled a full-time staff dedicated to supporting the work of the commission, convened three commission meetings in the first four months of its full existence and encouraged the commissioners to complete their study within one year, half the time the statute provided. The commission's goal is to complete its study by September 2010.

### **Awarding Grants for Historic Preservation**

The National Park Service awarded \$46.5 million in historic preservation grants to 59 states and U.S. territories. In announcing the awards, Secretary Salazar noted that "Preserving and celebrating our nation's rich history is a vital part of the Department of the Interior's mission... these grants from the Historic Preservation Fund will assist state, tribal and local governments in telling their stories while providing both cultural and economic benefits to the communities and to the nation as a whole." In 2008 projects similarly funded generated more than 67,700 jobs, created more than 10,390 housing units, and led to more than \$5.64 billion of private investments in the rehabilitation of commercial historic properties.

## **PROMOTING SCIENCE AND PROTECTIONS FOR WILDLIFE**

### **Restoring Endangered Species Consultation**

The Obama Administration through Secretary Salazar and Secretary of Commerce Locke restored the role of independent science in the Endangered Species Act's (ESA) "Section 7" interagency consultation process. The two Secretaries rescinded the previous Administration's December 2008 regulation that curtailed longstanding requirements for federal agencies to consult with the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration—the two agencies that administer the ESA—on actions that may affect threatened or endangered species. Their decision requires federal agencies to once again consult with federal wildlife experts before taking action that may jeopardize threatened or endangered species.

## **Celebrating Restoration of the Endangered Brown Pelican**

Reflecting the value and success of the Endangered Species Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service removed the brown pelican, once threatened with extinction by the pesticide DDT, from the list of threatened and endangered species.



*Brown Pelican*

### **Investing ARRA Funds for Jobs Relating to Science and Wildlife Protection**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is investing \$280 million under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to improve energy efficiency and renewable energy use on refuges and other facilities throughout the nation; restore wetlands, riparian habitat, and endangered species habitat; and restore and rehabilitate Service facilities crucial to the management and restoration of wildlife and fisheries.

In addition, the U.S. Geological Survey is investing \$140 million under the Act to restore and rehabilitate laboratories and research facilities and vessels; improve energy efficiency of facilities, upgrade earthquake and volcano monitoring networks and data centers to more robustly provide timely and accurate hazard information; and modernize stream gauges critical to monitoring stream flows and providing information to water managers and the public.

## **Protecting the Polar Bear**

The Fish and Wildlife Service began the administrative process to designate a proposed 200,500 square miles of critical habitat in the Arctic for the polar bear.

### **A New Path for the Wild Horse and Burro Program**

Secretary Salazar proposed a national solution to restore the health of America's wild horse and burro herds and the rangelands that support them by creating a cost-efficient, sustainable management program that includes the possible creation of wild horse preserves. The proposals are intended to fix the current, decades-old program that is not sustainable for the animals, the environment, or the taxpayers.



*Polar Bear*

## **Battle Creek (California) Restoration**

Using ARRA funds, the Bureau of Reclamation moved forward on a project to restore approximately 42 miles of prime salmon and steelhead habitat on Battle Creek in northern California, plus an additional six miles on its tributaries. Restoration of this perennial cold-water habitat will protect salmon species during drought, contribute to the recovery of their populations, and improve the reliability of the water supply in the rivers and tributaries.

### **San Joaquin River Restoration**

In October, the Bureau of Reclamation began implementing the San Joaquin River Restoration Settlement with the release of experimental "interim flows" from Friant Dam. The flows could provide valuable information about actions that will be required to support salmon reintroduction in the river, as called for in the settlement.

### **Proposed International Protections for Endangered Species**

The Obama Administration, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, submitted a number of proposals and resolutions for consideration during the upcoming meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in Doha, Qatar in March 2010. CITES is the international agreement which 175 nations have signed to ensure that international trade in wild animals and plants does not threaten their continued survival. Submitted proposals include (1) increased protections for the polar bear, (2) listing of six shark species due to overexploitation of the fin trade on their population status, and (3) listing of 31 red and pink corals for protection.

### **De-Listing the Gray Wolf in Idaho and Montana**

Based upon best available science, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service removed the gray wolf in Idaho and Montana, but not Wyoming, from the list of threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act. This decision was based upon the Service's wildlife biologists' conclusion that gray wolf populations in Montana and Idaho have returned to healthy levels and that state management plans are adequate to ensure continuing healthy population levels. The scientists also concluded that Wyoming's proposed wolf management plan is not adequate.

